



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT
AND YOUTH AFFAIRS**

(Reference: [Annual and financial reports 2018-2019](#))

Members:

MR M PETTERSSON (Chair)
MRS E KIKKERT (Deputy Chair)
MR M PARTON

TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE

CANBERRA

FRIDAY, 8 NOVEMBER 2019

Secretary to the committee:
Mrs N Kosseck (Ph: 620 50435)

By authority of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory

Submissions, answers to questions on notice and other documents, including requests for clarification of the transcript of evidence, relevant to this inquiry that have been authorised for publication by the committee may be obtained from the Legislative Assembly website.

APPEARANCES

ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority.....	1
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Amended 20 May 2013

The committee met at 9.01 am.

Appearances:

Barr, Mr Andrew, Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Social Inclusion and Equality, Minister for Tertiary Education, Minister for Tourism and Special Events and Minister for Trade, Industry and Investment

ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority
Carter, Mr Glenn, Chief Executive Officer

Canberra Institute of Technology
Sloan, Mr Craig, Board Chair
Cover, Ms Leanne, Chief Executive Officer
McKenry, Ms Paula, Executive Director, Education and Training Services

THE CHAIR: Welcome to the first public hearing of the Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Youth Affairs inquiry into annual and financial reports for 2018-19. On behalf of the committee I would like to thank you, Chief Minister, and your officials for attending today.

Today the committee will examine the annual report of the ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority, followed by the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate, looking at higher education, training and research, and the CIT 2018-19 annual report.

Can you please read the privilege statement that is in front of you and confirm that you have understood its contents? The proceedings are being recorded by Hansard for transcription purposes, and webstreamed and broadcast live.

Is there an opening statement that you would like to make or should we go straight to questions?

Mr Barr: No, we will take the annual report as the opening statement, Mr Chair.

THE CHAIR: Chief Minister, are there any emerging trends in construction training in the ACT?

Mr Barr: I will ask Mr Carter to address that.

Mr Carter: I can speak directly in relation to training. Certainly, as is usual in the pattern of expenditure around training, the busier the industry is, the busier the training sector becomes.

In terms of emerging trends, if I look back five years, there has been some good work undertaken in the area of mandatory training, which is something we did not have a lot of prior to, say, five years ago, particularly in the ACT. They have a particularly strong lead around asbestos and asbestos awareness, and asbestos containing materials training. I would say in general that that is a change. Rather than relying on industry

to sit back and say, “We’ve trained; we’ve done our training; we are trained,” it is about looking at training as a continual approach to their career and constantly upskilling themselves and furthering themselves, particularly around areas of danger in terms of health. That is probably a trend that we could look at, and it is reflected in our expenditure and training outcomes as well.

MRS KIKKERT: Page 26 shows that a significant portion of sponsorship funding, \$14,800 last year, went to Construction Charitable Works for drug and alcohol education program delivery. How many recipients participated in this program?

Mr Carter: They provide me with a report at the end of each year. I think it was in the area of 100 to 120. Obviously, that does not contain names because of privacy, and it is a range of support across that area.

MRS KIKKERT: What was the duration of the program?

Mr Carter: Our program with them or their program?

MRS KIKKERT: That particular program.

Mr Carter: That particular program is an ongoing program. It has existed since 2008. We are a co-supporter of that program. We do not fund the entire program. It receives its funding from a range of other providers or other sources.

MRS KIKKERT: You do not know the duration of the education program?

Mr Carter: The education program component trains apprentices in a whole range of training that they undertake during their contract of training, mainly at CIT. The other support mechanisms are for persons that may require accommodation because they find themselves homeless. They may have issues whereby they need to see psychologists around gambling issues or other mental health issues, so they provide a range of services to the industry.

MRS KIKKERT: Where was the program delivered from?

Mr Carter: In the ACT.

MRS KIKKERT: I am looking at the website for Construction Charitable Works. It says it provides a range of support services for CFMEU members. Are they all CFMEU members or can it be—

Mr Carter: No, there can be others as well, for Construction Charitable Works.

MRS KIKKERT: You do not have to be a CFMEU member to receive—

Mr Carter: Support—

MRS KIKKERT: support as part of the \$14,800?

Mr Carter: Support from that organisation? No, you do not need to be a member.

MRS KIKKERT: Do you know how many non-CFMEU members there are?

Mr Carter: No.

MR WALL: How does the authority determine who it will sponsor or provide financial contributions to?

Mr Carter: Applications are received from industry on that area of sponsorship. We look at sponsorship on the basis of how that aligns with what our outcomes need to be in training. For example, there are a number of associations that apply on an annual basis for their annual apprenticeship awards. That tends to be a set amount that we provide equally, to be distributed amongst all of those people who apply to us. The board makes decisions around what we can do under our legislation and in accordance with the annual training plan.

MR WALL: All sponsorship decisions are made at the board level?

Mr Carter: Correct.

MR WALL: Are there standing criteria or an assessment process that they go through to ensure that they meet the objectives of the training fund?

Mr Carter: There is. The annual training plan outlines that all applications need to set forward their objectives and the outcomes that they want to achieve from that particular sponsorship. Those applications are then tabled for the board and the board decides whether they are to be approved or not.

MR WALL: Are those applications made on an ad hoc basis or is there a—

Mr Carter: No. At any particular time that they see fit to seek an application for sponsorship, it is covered usually within the calendar year to which the training plan applies.

MR WALL: You may need to take this on notice: how many applications were made for the reporting period and did they all receive funding? Are you able to provide an explanation as to why they did not, if that is the case?

Mr Carter: Those who have applied did receive funding. There were no applications provided that were not.

MR WALL: So it is just the—

Mr Carter: It tends to be the same ones on an annual basis, unless, of course, there is a new initiative that comes forward. In that particular period, you could look back; they were probably the same ones from the previous 12 months.

MR PARTON: Mr Carter, this is a broader question. Building and construction across Australia is changing. It is forever changing. Can you talk to us about what changes have been made to the subject matter on offer in courses this year?

Mr Carter: Yes, the authority undertakes an all-of-industry consultation process which informs the annual training plan. We receive written reports with contractual arrangements we have with bodies that can provide us with that information. The Construction Industry Training Council is one. The Electrotechnology and Energy Advisory Board is another. Next year we will also seek a written report from the Property Council of the ACT, as well as anecdotal evidence from us and our industry leaders. I am liaising with industry on an issue basis.

In terms of a key difference, it changes on an annual basis. If we go back two to three years ago, there was a clear directive from industry that we needed to train more people in tree management and vegetation management when the light rail commenced, obviously for the reason that the trees were removed down Northbourne Avenue. So there was a spike in training in that area based around a particular project.

The key difference this year amongst the advice we received back, which is again informed into our 2020 training plan, although that does not preclude us from providing funding for approved eligible applicants and training now, is in the area of mental health and mental health awareness.

MR PARTON: Really?

Mr Carter: The industry wanted a particular area. That ties in with some of the work that WorkSafe ACT is doing in terms of their appointment there. Industry has basically said that it wants to see more training in that. We have always offered rebates for training in that area before but, again, industry has determined what it requires. Then RTOs—registered training organisations—will react to that demand. We have seen three new applications recently for training in those areas.

MR PARTON: That is interesting. You have mentioned this in response to a question about what is new and what has changed. But when it comes to mental health and mental health awareness, we are still talking about a small component of what you do, aren't we?

Mr Carter: That would be a small component of the overall training offered, because there were some 90 to 95 individual training programs we provided rebates for last year.

MR PARTON: Yes, but that is what has been added recently. You mentioned that you are getting some Property Council feedback?

Mr Carter: Yes.

MR PARTON: Is that the first time they have provided feedback?

Mr Carter: No, we have always engaged with their individual members. But what we would like to see is the organisation itself engage with its members and provide us with a specific written report around what their members see as key training needs for the preceding year. That can vary from individual to individual. Again, they have a good scope across the sector and it is difficult to get to every single person that is

involved. So going through those associations we think is a good way of obtaining some better advice than we are receiving at present.

MR PARTON: How does the process play out in regards to making those decisions about adding? How do you do that?

Mr Carter: We receive the reports from those organisations. Recommendations are made to the board about what we feel is different and what needs to be included in the annual training plan. Then the board itself approves that annual training plan. That approved training plan is then provided to the presiding minister for their approval in accordance with the legislation.

MR PARTON: Although the board ultimately ticks off on it and say yes, is it by and large one of those processes that, by the time it gets to the board, is a recommendation to the board? Or is the board actually going through a process of having a robust discussion about whether we need to have this or we need to have more of that? How does it work?

Mr Carter: No, they have discussion around different areas. No, all the time. For example, in the middle of the year before the training plan for the preceding year is approved, an application may come in today for an organisation that wants to put 10 of their people through a mental health awareness program. We have processes around what we would determine the rebate would be per individual. If that fits within the delegation I have as CEO, I can recommend that training and recommend it on the basis that it is (a) provided by a nationally registered training organisation and (b) the applicants are actually eligible under the guidelines of our training plan and our legislation.

Then that is taken to the board for the board meeting as well. So I may well have approved it, but then board will discuss it, and new programs are always highlighted for their awareness. Every single application that I approve is provided to the board on a monthly basis. They get to see what has been approved and they get to ask questions of me around how long the training takes, who is delivering it, why is it there, who needs it, are they eligible et cetera.

MRS KIKKERT: Mr Carter, what type of mental health issues are being brought forward to your attention?

Mr Carter: No specific issues; the types of training programs are essentially non-accredited training programs. So they are not from a national training package. The two differences are one program that has been requested—this is for next year—that is targeting supervisors and leading hands of teams and groups of individuals to give them some skills around awareness of observation and some tools around what they might need to do or how they may need to approach certain individuals under their supervision. That is one type of program. The other program is a general awareness program for all workers. If they are not feeling particularly well, what are some of their options in terms of who they can call, who they can go to and how they should speak up.

MRS KIKKERT: Are some of these programs or skill training also provided online?

Mr Carter: No.

MRS KIKKERT: It is face-to-face training.

Mr Carter: Face-to-face training. The board has set parameters around online training. We provide only rebates for training where there is at least 70 per cent face to face. We are aware that there are other online forms, I think commonly labelled as blended learning, where people attend sometimes and then they provide work for assessment on an online basis. We monitor that but, yes, straight online only programs are not supported by the authority.

MR WALL: What work does the training fund authority do to forecast skills needed in the construction industry?

Mr Carter: Two areas: we rely on the feedback from the industry reports we receive to determine what changes and/or new initiatives need to be included in the training plan. One of our five programs is an entry level program which supports apprenticeships and apprenticeship training. We have an ongoing 12-month, usually face-to-face, interaction that the authority undertakes with those organisations and individuals, group training organisations and registered training organisations to determine what they believe are skills shortage needs.

Skills shortage can have two definitions: one can be where we do not have enough electricians. However, we look at skills shortage from an employer's perspective, given that we provide incentive payments to employers. So it is what are those trades where employers find it difficult to attract employees, and there are many trades. This year we had 16 trades on what we define as a skills shortage list. We pay employers who employ people in those areas an incentive payment which assists them in their first year of employment when apprentices are deemed to be less productive in that context. Their feedback informs that. That is taken to an annual board meeting generally around December which informs which trades would be on our skills shortage list for the following 12 months.

MR WALL: That seems to be a narrow focus: looking in December—so next month—at what should be on the list for next year.

Mr Carter: No, it has happened all year; that is just when we take it to the board.

MR WALL: But what mapping or modelling is done to determine what the needs will be in the ACT in, say, five or ten years, given that an apprentice takes three to four years to train?

Mr Carter: Our legislation requires us to do an annual training plan, so we do not do a five-year training plan on that basis.

MR WALL: So no future forecasting beyond the 12-month period?

Mr Carter: No.

MR WALL: Do you think that is a restriction?

Mr Carter: It could be a question for those who employ the apprentices. Ideally people will take on an apprentice when they have confidence.

MR WALL: I put it to you, Chief Minister: do you think a 12-month forecasting for the skills needed in the construction industry is suitable or should there be a longer time line?

Mr Barr: There are a mix of short, medium and long-term needs.

MR WALL: But the long and medium-term needs clearly are not being assessed if it is done only on a 12-month basis.

Mr Barr: In relation to the work of this body, but that is not necessarily across Skills Canberra or, indeed, at the national level. At the moment we are engaged in one of the more comprehensive re-imagining exercises in terms of skills in Australia through the COAG process that has just kicked off. I imagine that there will be change in relation to this area as that COAG process concludes through 2020.

THE CHAIR: What workers are eligible for funding?

Mr Carter: To be eligible you need to be undertaking work that is liable for the levy, in other words, we collect a levy based on the value of certain works. There are works that are not included in the calculation to determine value to which the 0.2 per cent levy is applied. So workers need to be working for an organisation that undertakes 80 per cent or more of their work in the ACT, which draws in some regional organisations that employ people and do the majority of their work in the ACT. That work must be work liable for the levy.

A comprehensive schedule of works is attached to our legislation. If you wanted an example of work that would not be liable it is engineering, architecture, design. Those costs are not included in the determination of the value of work to which our levy is applied. Higher education is not included in terms of rebates that we provide because most higher ed providers are not nationally registered training organisations. It is around that trade, TAFE level and worker level for organisations that are eligible to apply.

THE CHAIR: Do you ever get applicants deemed not eligible?

Mr Carter: Yes.

THE CHAIR: What are the major reasons?

Mr Carter: They do not undertake the majority of their work in the ACT. People find this from all around Australia and submit applications on line and it is my job to determine whether they are eligible, and they need to satisfy our criteria. There are other areas where people are not undertaking the work in the construction industry. I had an example yesterday: I have a driver who works for a supplier and who drives trucks and delivers materials but he does not actually work on a building site. He is

not working in the construction industry; he in the transport industry. We cannot include everybody because our legislation specifically states construction industry only.

MRS KIKKERT: At page 34, training program expenses have increased this year. What courses were in demand and why was there a rise in participant numbers?

Mr Carter: Not one specific course this year; just an increase in overall training. The numbers increased significantly. Again, it could be determined by a range of industry programs. I should have mentioned this before: There has been a trend around a lot more awareness-only training. Our numbers have certainly increased but training durations have contracted. There seem to be more people undertaking shorter, quicker, sharper-focused programs.

A lot of the PCBUs that are responsible on some of our major sites now have inbuilt within their safety management plans a range of preferred training that they ensure that all their subcontractors working on that site must do. That has also increased the training numbers. As training numbers increase the rebate we provide increases.

MRS KIKKERT: Is there domestic violence awareness training?

Mr Carter: Yes, there is. That is in its third year now.

MRS KIKKERT: And everybody participates in it?

Mr Carter: Every building and construction industry-related apprentice who does their training through CIT undertakes that training.

THE CHAIR: What work is CIT doing to provide more skilling in the renewable energy sector?

Ms Cover: Thank you for that question. The CIT is making great advances in training in the renewable energy sector. My colleagues might give me some assistance with the details of the specific programs that we are doing. In particular there is a large increase in the number of electrical apprentices who are undertaking training at CIT. We know that a lot of those apprentices are upskilling and reskilling to provide the solar PV training for the renewable energy space as well.

You will know from the annual report that CIT is also a GWO provider in terms of Global Wind Organisation accreditation, which is an internationally recognised accreditation which gives us capacity to lead training for renewable energies across Australia, not just within the ACT and region.

So I think it is fair to say that CIT in the past 12 months has really lifted itself to be one of the leading vocational education and training organisations across the nation in the renewable energy sector.

Ms McKenry: We are very proud of the work that CIT has done, particularly in the very short period of time, to ramp up to respond to industry requirements around renewable energies. That is taking place across a number of fronts. An example of

that would be an increase in our electrical apprenticeships, which have come up by over 11 per cent.

An additional requirement for being an electrical apprentice is that if you wish to be approved and licensed to install solar panels and the related photovoltaic batteries that store that solar panel, there is an additional licence required. In the past 18 months CIT has, with the support of our industry partners, been able to set up at our Bruce campus a particular facility that allows our students to undertake that licence so that they can be approved solar installers and battery maintenance people in the industry. As you would understand, that requires access to highly specialist equipment in a safe environment that allows the students to practise so that they can undertake those processes safely. We have a substantial facility now available at our Bruce campus to support solar renewable energy.

We are also doing work with some of our industry partners in investigating the possibilities of hydrogen replacing LPG gas. That is in the very embryonic stages at the moment. We are also able, with the support of our partners such as Neoen, to have a dedicated team that looks at renewables.

We have recently been able to offer a group of students the opportunity to go on a tour and attend the All-Energy renewables conference in Melbourne free of charge, and we provided the opportunity for those students to go on to Adelaide and attend wind farms and see the latest wind technology and maintenance technology in that space. They also had an opportunity to visit the Tesla station, in terms of electric vehicles and the work that is being undertaken there, as well as the Tonsley innovation centre, which is groundbreaking in forming relationships with industry and TAFE South Australia to support students to engage in those emerging industries. We are very proud of the fact that we have been able to give our students what we believe are more integrated and connected opportunities than ever before.

Ms Cover: Ken Wilson, who works in our renewable energies as a teacher has just been listed as a finalist in the Australian Training Awards for the national VET teacher of the year.

THE CHAIR: Wonderful. You mentioned accreditation with the Global Wind Organisation. Where else in Australia is accredited?

Ms Cover: I do not think anybody else in Australia is accredited for that.

Ms McKenry: I do not think so but I would have to double-check that before we lay claim to it.

MRS KIKKERT: In June there was a *Canberra Times* article about the possible move of Reid CIT to Woden. Can you please give us an update on that?

Mr Barr: The government has determined to progress work on campus modernisation across all of the CIT campuses. We are making some final determinations in relation to the CIT's presence in the Woden town centre. I do not have an announcement for you today but there will be some announcements shortly around the next phase of the campus modernisation strategy.

What is clear from the work that CIT is undertaken, and indeed the work that the government has, that it is important that the CIT has both contemporary facilities that it is able to move into training in new emerging areas within the territory economy, and also that we need to locate training opportunities close to where those who are seeking those training opportunities would want to go to learn.

So across CIT's network of campuses across the city, we have recently had modernisation projects and new facilities either opened or funded at the Bruce Campus, as well as in Fyshwick. We will conclude our determinations and decision-making process in relation to Woden, Tuggeranong and the city in the coming months, and we will have some more to say on that very soon.

MRS KIKKERT: You mentioned the modernisation of the Bruce Campus. What are they and—

Mr Barr: We have recently opened an allied health facility refurbishment and renewal within that area of the Bruce campus.

Ms Cover: As the Chief Minister has mentioned, just recently we opened formally the new allied health training facility at the Bruce campus. We have had students in that facility since the second semester this year. That is in response to the increasing demand we are getting for allied health.

Allied health are the therapists who work in para-professional hospital and service settings to help patients recover from various issues. They take on a lot of one-on-one care and practice either in homes or in particular service facilities such as aged care facilities or other service providers across Canberra. We are seeing an incredible increase with that. I suspect that it is the NDIS activation that is leading to some of that.

The new facility that the Chief Minister referred to at the Bruce campus, funded by the ACT government, is a really fantastic state-of-the-art practice facility. Ms McKenry spoke earlier about the importance of students being able to practise in a safe environment where they can afford to make mistakes and have teachers by their side giving them feedback immediately about alternative ways and methods to assist patients. The facility at Bruce simulates a home environment and a care environment, with all the facilities that the students would need to assist with clients in a real work setting. There is some therapy work that goes with that, helping patients re-establish the quality of their lives around their mobility, their flexibility and their application to do everyday tasks, mainly in the home but in work environments as well.

Ms McKenry: Bruce is a very exciting campus. Last year there was also a simulated environment established for dental assisting. As you can imagine, that requires highly specialist equipment. In a teaching environment it also requires a specific layout so that students can be supported and also assessed in a simulated workplace environment. That facility is also fairly new at Bruce, and the enrolments in that area are looking very healthy.

I mentioned previously that the renewables space is in our sustainable house at Bruce

campus. That, again, is a particular facility that is built for students to be able to understand and work not just in electrical and solar renewables but also on heating and cooling buildings and the ducting and plumbing that has gone on in that space. So that is also a specially designed teaching facility. All the pipes and things are colour coded for students to be able to be able to review and look at ways of sustainable building and development.

On a smaller scale, we also did some work in our carpentry barn at Bruce to reorganise workflow to increase our capacity to take greater numbers of apprentices. So there is work going on in a number of teaching spaces at Bruce campus.

Ms Cover: In terms of renewable energies, our high-risk training space at Bruce serves not just the ACT but also the region in terms of those high-risk areas. You can imagine the turbine heights that electricians have to operate at. There are skills to operate at those heights and sometimes remotely, with first aid et cetera. That training is done at the Bruce campus through updated facilities as well.

Ms McKenry: We have been very well supported by WorkSafe, for instance, who have recently helped us by providing some additional equipment which, as you can imagine, is very expensive and specialist, so that students are now able to practise on cranes that go above a certain height. I would have to check up on the technicalities; it is not my area.

MRS KIKKERT: I understand that some Year 10 students from public schools do introduction to nursing at CIT Bruce. Is there potential to extend that program to other subjects, and is it available at other CITs?

Ms Cover: There are a number of programs that we work with the ACT government through the Education Directorate on that support predominantly Year 9, 10, 11 and 12 students to gain additional vocational education and training skills. Yesterday we heard about some of the work that we are doing in the building construction space. That is at the Bruce campus. We are also doing connection work around our business and leadership college at the Reid campus. That also happens at the Tuggeranong campus, and it definitely happens at the Bruce campus in the Year 12 program as well.

Ms McKenry: That is the pathways program. Is that what you are referring to—

MRS KIKKERT: That is right, and I—

Ms McKenry: or are you referring to nursing in particular?

MRS KIKKERT: I am only aware that introduction to nursing is available for Year 10 students and some Year 11 students; I was not aware that other subjects can also be applied to for students. Is that correct?

Ms Cover: That is correct. Hospitality is an area with that as well.

MRS KIKKERT: Do you know what is being done with the old CIT Woden site?

Mr Barr: That is something the planning and urban renewal minister is managing.

There are no announcements on that today either.

MR PARTON: I want to talk about the cessation of some courses in Tuggeranong: adult literacy and numeracy, the certificate II in general education for adults, which it is my understanding caters to disengaged early school leavers, and the return to work for women course at Tuggeranong CIT. My understanding is that these services for the marginalised people of Tuggeranong will cease as of 2020. Can someone talk me through what has gone on there in regard to the decision-making process and why that decision has been made?

Ms Cover: That is not correct. We are not ceasing delivery of that program, and we are certainly not ceasing delivery of that program in 2020. I think you will appreciate that every year we look at all our programs in terms of what is best for students. We overlay that with what is required in the training packages in terms of what skills teachers need. We then overlay that with what facilities we have across our variety of campuses. We also look at what we provide, where we provide it and how we provide those services on an annual basis. It is not unusual for us to move the provision of training between campuses, to change the mix of face-to-face delivery to some online delivery, to add additional services into the teaching areas, to make classes bigger or smaller, or to deliver in different ways.

MR PARTON: Are you telling me that the courses that I mentioned, the face-to-face component, will still be available in Tuggeranong in 2020?

Ms Cover: Do you want to give the details of the particular program?

Ms McKenry: Can I first clarify? That is actually two programs?

MR PARTON: Yes.

Ms McKenry: One is the certificate II in general education for adults and the other is return to work. Both of those programs are in our course guide, so that is an indication of CIT's intention to keep offering those courses to student groups with special needs.

At the moment, in terms of the return to work for women program, we have been working with our partners. Some of the partners are looking at running that program, so we are investigating. It is yet to be determined whether there is enough requirement for that program for our partners and CIT to run two programs or whether CIT might support another deliverer, such as the Salvation Army or some of the bodies that support disengaged people to return and engage back with education. That will become more evident over the coming months when we see enrolment numbers. Are there sufficient numbers for two programs, or would we work together to offer a single program? And where that would be offered would be dependent on the demand and the support from our partners.

The same would go for the certificate II in general education for adults. CIT is very aware, with that cohort of people who might have particular needs or might have had a past negative experience of education, that we want to make sure that they have the most positive experience of education and the opportunity to work and be supported by as many support services as we have available. Tuggeranong as a satellite campus

does not always have as much access to those support services as some of other larger campuses such as Reid, Fyshwick and Bruce. That would be a consideration when looking at the needs of those student cohorts.

Another consideration is making sure that the class sizes are sufficient to give learners an effective learning experience and an opportunity to undertake group activities and effective project work, because they are all important skills. Learning how to learn is part of what is important in that CGEA qualification, particularly for disengaged learners.

All those factors will be taken into account, including enrolment numbers, over the next few months, and CIT will make a decision for that program, as for all of our programs, about where it is best delivered for the needs of the students and the demand.

MR WALL: When those courses are delivered, at Tuggeranong, for example, is every competency in that course delivered at Tuggeranong or are there some competencies that need to be delivered at another facility?

Ms Cover: For those specific courses.

Ms McKenry: For those specific courses. We have the capacity to deliver them all at Tuggeranong. It would depend on the circumstance. In the past we have delivered all competencies at Tuggeranong. It would depend on student needs and if there were reasons why they could not attend at Tuggeranong campus. It would be possible to offer it on a different campus. It would depend on the situation.

MR WALL: I understand the flexibility from the student perspective, but is there often a planning or coordination decision that is taken that says that 80 per cent of a certificate II can be offered at Tuggeranong but for a couple of core competencies people need to go to Fyshwick, Bruce, Reid or whatever the case may be.

Ms Cover: Yes. That flexibility is always looked at in every course, depending on what the content is for the particular course and where it fits best with the facilities to actually deliver that course. Some of the courses, you appreciate, are quite specialised and might need particular specialist equipment. Others might literally need a computer, and obviously the software is available on any campus. It depends on exactly the content for the courses.

Ms McKenry: For instance, in the cert II, the CGEA, if students were undertaking a project that involved the preparation of food and hospitality, that could not be delivered at Tuggeranong.

MR WALL: What about something as basic as the literacy and numeracy component of the course?

Ms McKenry: That can be delivered at any of our campuses.

Ms Cover: It can, although—

MR WALL: Is that continuing at Tuggeranong or is that being moved elsewhere?

Ms Cover: When you say a literacy and numeracy program, there is not—

MR WALL: No. Is there a competency unit in the certificate IIs that were mentioned that relates to literacy and numeracy, and is it offered at Tuggeranong or is it being transferred to another campus?

Ms McKenry: All the competencies in the CGEA relate to literacy and numeracy. It is a general education qualification. That is the purpose of the qualification: to improve people's literacy and numeracy.

Ms Cover: All our students undertake literacy and numeracy training across all our campuses, though.

Ms McKenry: Yes.

MR WALL: Mr Sloan, from the board's perspective, what are the key objectives and challenges that CIT faces in both the short and the medium term going forward?

Mr Sloan: The challenges that we face are probably those being faced by all TAFEs across the country, that is, operating in a highly regulated and highly competitive VET sector where public TAFEs are having to do it quite tough in a very competitive market.

For us it is about ensuring that we can continue to operate effectively and efficiently. You have heard about some of the complexities with a few of the courses and the considerations that go into every decision made. The board is very clear on setting the strategic direction for the institute and asking for efficiencies across the group. That requires, as we did a few years ago, looking at all courses that we offer, and whether they are meeting the needs of the community and the needs particularly of industry.

Layered on top of all those other considerations is always our underlying role as a public provider of VET, and being able to provide training to people who otherwise may not have access to it. That is a decision that we do not take lightly, on any decision made.

The challenges that we have, as we roll through this ever-changing world of skill development, relate to how we become far more flexible in being able to offer our course offerings. We are very stuck in regulation and in traditional ways of doing things, which can be slow. Private providers can roll things out a lot more quickly and cheaply. We have seen, even in media this week, that someone got themselves significantly unstuck through some of the workings and policies set by federal government, in particular.

We also need to make sure that we have the facilities to be able to train our people in the skills that are required into the future. How we invest in those is always an ongoing challenge, as is knowing what they are. How we then find the resources to do that is an ongoing battle. The campus modernisation that the Chief Minister referred to previously is a big platform for allowing us to be ready for future skill development,

and we look forward to working with the government as that rolls forward.

As we have seen with our cyber courses in particular in the past 18 months, when we work on an area of future interest and skill development in this community, and when we partner with industry, significant things happen. That has been a true highlight. The fact is that facility and course offerings are among the finest in national training and industry collaboration. We are very proud of what we do in that regard.

MR WALL: To use your words, TAFEs are doing it tough in the competitive training space. What are the challenges for a traditional TAFE provider compared to what is being offered by other operators?

Mr Sloan: With some of the challenges we have, if you are a private provider you are able to make decisions very quickly around resource management: where you choose to invest your funds, what courses you choose to do or not do. When you are a TAFE, you have, I suppose, far more challenges around it. There are requirements on you as a public provider to provide a suite of courses about which, if I were a private company, I would say, “There’s no way I’m doing that because there’s no money in it. I’m going to stick with the profitable areas and that’s where I’m going to train.”

We are up against boutique training providers in the private sector offering those sorts of courses. We do not have that luxury. We need to be able to provide broadly. That is not only one of the challenges but also one of the great opportunities and benefits that we have.

As a public provider you are bound to employ public servants. As a board we are aware of the requirements and of working with unions around the workforce that we have. Again, in the private sector, you are not confined by a lot of those restrictions that we find in the TAFE sector.

If you look across the TAFEs more broadly—certainly, Leanne and I sit on the national board of TAFE Directors Australia—there is no doubt that all of them are doing it quite tough, and are trying to find what is the perfect model to deal particularly with a federal government that is not really setting any strategic or clear directions as to where TAFEs are to go, let alone where the VET sector is going.

One of the beauties we have here is that we have a government that is very supportive of its VET sector, and particularly of its TAFE. That is a huge advantage for us compared to what we are seeing across some of the states. I think we need to leverage that advantage.

MR WALL: The advantage of that support is not just being able to point out the direction, but also the funding that is provided. How does the budget submission and the funding contribution made through government meet the board’s expectations?

Mr Sloan: As chair of this board, or any board I am on, the more money you get, the better off we will be. CIT is no different. The real challenge, even if you get more funding, is where you are going to spend it and what you are going to do with it. You have to be quite clear as a board about setting a strategic direction regarding where we want to play and how we want to play. It is not about being bigger; it is about making

sure that we are delivering the right courses at the right time in the right locations.

We often talk about whether that means we stay the same size or go smaller, or do we grow a little bit? That is fine; that is why the decision-making is quite critical when it comes to what courses we need to stop versus where we need to spend those resources going forward. That will always be the case. We cannot just continue to roll out.

More funding would be fantastic—to have a war chest to be able to invest future funds. Again that is part of the campus modernisation conversation we are having with government. It is also part of the review of our funding model, to ensure that we are set up for the future.

MR WALL: At an almost two to one return on investment, it is better than some other infrastructure and investment decisions that the government has taken.

Mr Sloan: Thank you for pointing that out.

Mr Barr: Thank you for that gratuitous commentary, Mr Wall.

MRS KIKKERT: What other support from the federal government would you like to see?

Ms Cover: TAFE is considered amongst the well over 4,000 other registered training providers as just another provider, but as you have heard this morning, CIT as a TAFE is far from just another provider.

In terms of its positioning within the VET sector we would like to see for TAFE across Australia a positioning similar to what the public universities get in the market. Not anybody can just set up shop as a university; there are lots of requirements for that. When universities are established, there is a special recognition of the community for the purpose of the universities as a public-owned entity.

We would like to see within the national standards for regulation quality standards, where TAFE is exceptional. You will see in our annual report CITs track record in the national sector, not just across TAFEs but across all providers. CIT is outstanding, and that is why we have been listed in the top three large registered training organisations in Australia this year.

We would like to see a positioning at the commonwealth level of TAFE with its provision for some of the heavy lifting the TAFE sector does. The Chief Minister and our board chair have spoken about some of those challenges this morning. For instance, in the ACT of all the students with a disability who are registered in the VET sector, 84 per cent of those students are studying with CIT. We have an incredibly diverse range of students. Unlike a private provider that can pick and choose their clients, we are open and accessible to an incredibly diverse range of learners, which means that we have multi-generational learners in the classroom at the same time.

You have heard this morning about the work we do for those that might be marginalised or disadvantaged and the incredible work CIT does in the community to

make sure that we engage more learners. But at the other end of the spectrum more and more complexities are coming into the technical skills for all workplaces. The vocational education and training and particularly TAFEs must have the ability to work with industry on applied research and new skills that will be needed for every workplace, whether it is cyber, sustainable practices or literacy and numeracy upgrades and new ways of thinking and planning for every workplace. Every institution and every workplace, is trying to make sure that it can adapt and evolve with the changing nature of the world of work. TAFE can lead, and CIT is showing how it can lead in that space.

We would like to see a repositioning and a rethinking of where TAFE sits in that national sector. We are not just one of a huge number of other providers; we have a special purpose. We have incredible scale we can utilise on behalf of all citizens that we serve and all industries that we work with. We would like to see thinking around the regulation and the accreditation. We would like TAFE to have its own ability to set its courses with state and territory governments and be recognised for the quality work and the heavy lifting we do.

It is mainly around regulation, but we would also like to think about products. The training products are done nationally by industry and we are finding that with the changing nature of work the training packages that are done nationally and centrally are not agile enough to adapt to industry needs. If CIT and TAFE across Australia had that ability to work with industry to set qualifications at the local level to be responsive to industry then the advantage of TAFEs advantage could be leveraged even more than it currently is.

MRS KIKKERT: How would this benefit CIT and the community?

Ms Cover: We have already shown that CIT can be agile and responsive when we work closely with industry. Some of the examples are cyber and renewables in the past couple of years. We spend a lot of resources showing transparency and accountability on multiple fronts at a national level and across a number of standards in the national training packages. As a government-owned institution a level of transparency and accountability already exists with the ACT government because we are owned under legislation. The level of resources we currently spend on the accountability in the national system could be freed up and directed more into education and training and less away from the mechanics of showing the transparency that we show multiple times as a registered training organisation.

The risks managed through the ACT government through CIT being owned by the government are not the same risks as those of a small provider. As Mr Sloan said, we have seen some unintended consequences of some of that national policy just this week in terms of private provisions. We would like to see more resources and more flexibility for the institute to direct those resources to education and training and away from the compliance that sits there that we think is a one-size-fits-all model.

Mr Barr: In short, a risk-based approach to regulation within the sector would be an important outcome of the COAG skills reform agenda in which I think all states and territories and the federal government are engaging with a sense of goodwill, at this point in the process anyway. Michaelia Cash, the federal minister, has been very clear

from the first meeting of the skills council to focus on this specific reform agenda that she wishes to work closely with states and territories.

Obviously the states and territories represent a diversity of economic situations and political views. There are both Liberal and Labor states. I observe that the states and territories regardless of the colour of the government tend to have a more unified position these sorts of reforms.

MRS KIKKERT: That should not matter.

Mr Barr: It should not, and in this instance some of the allies for reform will be both large and small states as well as Labor and Liberal state training and tertiary education ministers. Part of this is the commonwealth's needing to let go a little of some of the red tape and regulation that has encumbered this sector for decades. We will see; I would have thought on face value a risk-based regulatory approach and a bit of red tape reduction is the sort of package that might appeal to the current federal government and we hope to make some progress on that.

THE CHAIR: Is the CIT Student Association a separate legal entity from CIT?

Ms Cover: Yes it is.

THE CHAIR: Are there any non-student or employees of CIT on the student board?

Ms Cover: The CIT board has a CIT student representative

THE CHAIR: Does CIT charge a student amenity fee?

Ms Cover: We do not have an amenity fee, as such; the student association has fees. We have material fees attached to courses but not for the student association through the institute.

THE CHAIR: So the student association charges fees of their members?

Ms Cover: Correct.

THE CHAIR: How much are those fees?

Ms Cover: I have to take that on notice. That is an issue for the student association.

THE CHAIR: The management of student accommodation at CIT has been transferred from the CIT to the student association. Was there any particular reason for that?

Ms Cover: We are always looking at the management of our facilities. That decision reflects what we believe is the best fit for working with a provider in terms of looking after that accommodation that really understands the specifics of the vocational education training sector. It is quite different from what you might expect at a university. Our students are not with us for a four-year term; they are in and out of their learning. Most of our students are employed so they are studying part time. The

facilities we have, which are small, are predominantly used for international students.

Similar to the university sector students come in and perhaps in their first contact with CIT they want to be in a dorm situation where they are living close to study areas. At Bruce campus the students are very close to their education and, of course, they can access the other campuses. After they have had a bit of a session in becoming familiar with Canberra, getting to know their course and understanding what is expected of them by the Canberra community and CIT they tend to move into other accommodation types in private arrangements. We have decided that the arrangement with the CIT Student Association is a really good match. The student association is really well equipped for understanding what students need.

THE CHAIR: Who owns the buildings?

Ms Cover: The CIT.

THE CHAIR: Under this new management arrangement the student association is responsible for maintenance?

Ms Cover: No, the building maintenance is still with the CIT. We have a number of facilities staff and we have 24-7 staff available to support students. The grounds maintenance and the maintenance of the accommodation is all done by CIT. We use the regular reporting, monitoring and repair arrangements within that and the facilities staff from CIT are there to maintain the facilities.

THE CHAIR: Does the student association derive revenue from the rental or the accommodation fees?

Ms Cover: You would have to direct that question to the student association regarding the exact mechanism.

THE CHAIR: You are party to this contract; it is your building.

Ms Cover: We get revenue from them, if that is your question.

MRS KIKKERT: How are things progressing with the partnership with UNSW?

Mr Barr: Very well. In respect of the work that is underway for CIT in terms of existing courses and opportunities as well as the work that we are undertaking in relation to UNSW Canberra's expansion, both have opportunities for the future as well as strengthening the existing ties. CIT has partnerships with each of the universities that operate in the city. I think those ties are strengthening. Obviously, there are different opportunities with each of the universities in terms of that partnership in different areas of education and training. But I think the high level commentary is progressing well. Do you want to add any further detail on examples?

Ms Cover: Thank you, Chief Minister. Yes, as you say, we have very strong relationships. We have fantastic relationships with all the universities here in Canberra. A lot of those connections are driven through the Chief Minister's VC forum. We meet regularly to talk about ACT-wide issues but also through our

joint membership with the universities as foundation members of the CBR Innovation Network. This is another good forum for us to get together to think about areas for growth, student retention and student cost collaboration.

Just this year we have done a couple of things directly with the university sector. I think it was around mid-year that we ran a zero CO2 forum at our renewable energy space on the Bruce campus. That attracted students from a variety of universities. I think that the ANU students might have just pipped our CIT students with their pitch for sustainable ideas around solar energy. But that is an example of where we open the doors and work collaboratively with other universities.

We are also working closely with Mill House at the University of Canberra in terms of student ideas and incubator ideas in that space. That is our relationship with CBRIN. We have been working for a number of years now very closely with the ANU through their ICT engineering and cyber areas. That is also growing with our relationship with the University of New South Wales.

It is really about identifying, as a tertiary sector coming together, what the unique opportunities are that the ACT environment presents for attracting and retaining students, attracting and retaining businesses here and how the tertiary sector—vocational, higher education and, indeed, the school sector—can all come together to present increased opportunities for students and increased opportunities for employers to locate their businesses here.

In respect of the relationships between all the universities here in our jurisdiction, I know that when I talk to my colleagues nationally they are quite envious of the relationships that we have with our university partners here and our ability to be quite agile and responsive to meet training needs across the ACT and region.

MRS KIKKERT: Will UNSW be taking over the Reid CIT campus?

Mr Barr: “Taking over” is not the language I would use. I think UNSW will work in partnership with CIT. I think initially that there is an opportunity on the Reid campus for UNSW to lease some surplus space from the CIT. That is where I think this would have its initial growth. I see it as being important for UNSW and CIT to work closely together, particularly in expanding education and training opportunities in a couple of the growth areas that we have been discussing where the UNSW expansion in their offerings in Canberra, particularly providing opportunities outside of the Defence Force—so effectively offering courses to civilians—will be an important collaboration opportunity, as will be collaborative work on English language training.

That is another practical example of where I think the two institutions can work closely together. They also work very closely together within the CBR Innovation Network. I guess that sort of language I do not think is particularly helpful—

MRS KIKKERT: No, thanks for clarifying that.

Mr Barr: and I do not mean that in a hyper-political way. I am just saying that that is—

MRS KIKKERT: No, completely understand.

Mr Barr: not what we are talking about. I think that there are some particularly good opportunities, as UNSW Canberra expands their offerings in the territory into areas where other institutions do not currently have offerings, that they do so in collaboration with CIT. There will be opportunities, clearly, where at the moment people have to leave the territory to get those skills or where we can bring people into Canberra who would otherwise not get the training opportunity, who might go interstate or even go internationally to get those specific skill training opportunities.

I guess that is the exciting proposition here. What we are looking to do is to expand the tertiary education sector in the ACT. It is already our biggest export earning industry and one of the largest employers in Canberra. In terms of the ACT's gross state product of about \$40 billion, the tertiary education sector is about \$3.3 billion of that. As a stand-alone industry sector it is a major contributor and one of the fastest growing areas of our economy. So we need this expansion both in terms of meeting our own local skill needs, regional skill needs, national skill needs and then as an international export industry for the ACT.

It really is tick, tick, tick, tick across all of those areas. It is exactly where we want to position the ACT's economy so that not only will we generate a more skilled and better educated community but also we will generate new economic activity and new jobs for Canberra. I cannot think of a better strategic investment both in terms of public funding and in terms of public policy setting to encourage the growth and collaboration of our tertiary education sector.

That is why we have Study Canberra. That is why we have the VC's forum. That is why we have this level of collaboration between our higher education institutions. It is a key strength for Canberra. As Ms Cover has indicated, this sort of cooperative arrangement does not happen in other Australian jurisdictions; so we really should take advantage of what is nearly a unique comparative advantage for the ACT economy.

MRS KIKKERT: Just to clarify, once Reid CIT campus moves over to Woden, will UNSW conduct some courses at Reid campus? Is that correct?

Mr Barr: No, that is oversimplifying. We will be making a series of investments in modernising CIT's facility; so there is no straight Reid-for-Woden switch. It may be that new facilities are built in Bruce, at the Fyshwick trade skills centre, potentially in Woden, also in Tuggeranong where current CIT courses may be better delivered, or new courses, more to the point. So CIT will retain a presence in the CBD. That may or may not be in partnership with more than one university.

We are also looking at the location of new facilities for the institute, as well as where we could renew existing facilities where it might make sense to collocate facilities. An example of that has been outlined this morning. It relates to the new allied health facilities at Bruce. There will be opportunities to really expand into new areas. I think that we need to broaden the thinking and the commentary around moving from Reid to Woden. I do not think that it in any way encapsulates what the campus modernisation agenda is about and, indeed, what the expansion of tertiary education

in the ACT is about.

What I can say clearly is that the ACT government will be investing in new TAFE facilities on existing campuses and potentially in new locations. We will also be supporting the growth and expansion of our universities, both on existing campuses and in new locations.

MR PARTON: I want to go to page 10 of the report in regard to culture. The foreword from the CEO contains a reference to a shift in the culture at CIT. What does that mean, and how is that shift being measured?

Ms Cover: I think you have heard this morning from Craig Sloan, our board chair, around some of the challenges that the TAFE sector faces. I would say that they are the same challenges all particular education institutions are facing at the moment. We think that CIT's best value to the ACT community is our ability to adapt and co-evolve with the education and training system and also with the other systems that we serve and are a part of in the ACT.

To do that, we want to make sure that we are making available to our students the most contemporary practices, ways of thinking and ways of tackling some of the most complex problems in the workplace. We want to make sure that our staff are well positioned and able to think like that as well. The culture that we are talking about is really that ability to be able to constantly adapt and reposition our thinking around our course offerings and meeting student needs.

A decade ago, as an institution, you would start your academic year with a fairly stable program. There was not a lot of change to the academic programs from one year to another. You had your budget; you had your resources; you had your training programs. They were reasonably stable from one year to another.

These days, we have the interaction and connection with industry on top of all the hyperconnectivity that is happening in the world anyway through digital connection et cetera. That really amplifies the pressure on us to make sure that our staff are in the best position to make sure that, in addition to the technical skills, they are well equipped to deliver for their particular industry.

We service nearly 40 different industries through different training packages at CIT, with over 280 courses. We need flexibility across all those different cultures. The world of work is changing very rapidly; we want to make sure that we are building into our staff thinking around how we go about doing that. That means for us that we want to see and measure more connectivity with industry and different ways of working with industry.

In the past 12 months we have seen new partnerships emerge with CIT and Seeing Machines, CIT and CA Technologies, and CIT and a number of small cybersecurity industries. That is a demonstration of the changing culture of the institute in its ability to be more agile in the way that we think and that we really make sure that our courses are serving the particular needs of the ACT workforce and we can build into our systems, our processes and our practices at the institute more agile, flexible, responsive programs.

MR PARTON: Are your staff all-embracing of this vision?

Ms Cover: I think staff are definitely all-embracing of making sure that CIT continues to be the most valuable asset in the vocational education training space in the ACT, and therefore staff absolutely understand—at an individual level, a team level, a department level, a whole-of-organisation level—the need for us to continue to be relevant to the ACT community and the need to adapt.

We would not expect all staff to be necessarily particularly thrilled with the fact that we have to keep going through constant evolution and change, but I think that staff understand that. I am incredibly impressed with the way that staff have come on board into this space.

We have had 160 staff participate in our relationship partnership with the Canberra Innovation Network partnership. That is introducing new ways of thinking, new ways of approaching how you develop products and services for students. Then we are doing a much larger cultural piece about what is happening in the world of work outside CIT around hyperconnectivity, the way that networks work, the way that businesses work, and the way that students are expecting new things from CIT. I am really pleased with the staff.

Mr Sloan: I might add that part of the culture journey has been getting away from the traditional silo approach to the way CIT used to run. Historically—Ms Cover is right—it was structured in a way where the government put on a governing board. It was very traditional. One part of CIT really did not understand what the other part was doing, let alone what we were doing on other campuses. Part of this culture change has been to break those barriers down so that we all understand what each other is doing. So when we are in market, when we are talking to students in industry, we know what other opportunities are available out there that we can leverage off and we can start to feed. For me, that has been one of the major changes that we all need to do on this journey.

Do we think that every member of staff is hooked into this and going for it? Absolutely not. But show me an organisation that is, including my own. The whole idea is to start to change the behaviours and the mindset of people to make sure that we are nimble. The first direction of this board when we got together was that we needed to be able to turn the *Titanic* around pretty quickly to be able to be relevant not only for today but for tomorrow and into the future.

If we are going to do that, we need staff who are prepared to do that, not staff stuck in the traditional ways of doing it. I have been delighted, I must say, by the way that staff, led by Leanne and the executive team, have really leant into this and got on board.

MR PARTON: It has been suggested to me that the staff satisfaction surveys—I know that there was one completed just recently—have changed dramatically. The suggestion that has been made to me is—I do not know if I can actually say it the way it was suggested to me—that they are not necessarily skewed in order to elicit only positive answers. That suggestion to me was that for the first time they actually gave

staff the ability to say that they do not think something is working. I wonder what reflections you would have on that suggestion that has been expressed to me. Was there a specific conscious change in the way that those staff satisfaction surveys were done?

Ms Cover: You are right; we have recently closed. We have not yet collated the survey that closed a week ago, but we are going to do that very quickly. The survey that we have used this year is exactly the same survey that we used two years ago. We made that decision two years ago to try to get more information through open fields where staff could be more direct with their feedback. It is an anonymous survey, which I think encourages staff to be more open. We tried to ask questions at all scales of the organisation. “What does it feel like in your immediate work team?” “What does it feel like in terms of your college or division?” “What does it feel like across the campus?” “What do you think about senior management?” “What do you think about the executive?” That shift was brought in to reflect the types of changes that our board chair has articulated this morning regarding making sure that we are listening to staff about what they need and how they feel about the organisation.

MR PARTON: In regard to staffing issues, I understand that there have been some issues with bullying and harassment claims in recent years?

Ms Cover: Sorry, what is your question?

MR PARTON: I understand that CIT have had a few issues with bullying and harassment claims in recent years. Have they been resolved?

Ms Cover: I can take on notice the specifics. My understanding is that in the past three years we might have had one bullying and harassment claim each year for those three previous years. They have been resolved in the past. We have one at the moment, and that is still underway.

MR PARTON: Finally, how many staff are on extended sick leave or other leave due to a stress-related illness?

Ms Cover: There is no “stress leave”, if you like; that is not an element of leave provision. Of course, staff take leave for a whole lot of reasons, including medical reasons that may be related to their workplace. I can take on notice exactly how many staff are on leave at any given time, but as to exactly the nature of that leave, it does not get reported as “stress leave”.

MR WALL: As part of taking that on notice, could you also indicate the number of staff that are on leave as a result of a workers comp claim?

Ms Cover: Yes, I can do that.

MR WALL: I have a question about page 62, on the sustainable development performance of CIT. There has been an over 23 per cent increase in the use of water. Why, particularly given that we are in a drought?

Ms Cover: Could I take on notice the question of the use of the water. There is one

thing it could be. In the past 12 months we had a burst water main on Constitution Avenue. I am not sure that that is exactly the rationale for the increase.

MR WALL: The equivalence is about four Olympic swimming pools; I think that would have been a bigger issue.

Ms Cover: I definitely know that unfortunately—not from our doing, but through some maintenance work on Constitution Avenue—there was a ruptured water pipe, and a lot of water flowed for a number of hours until we were able to get that under control.

THE CHAIR: That concludes today's hearing. As per standing orders, responses to questions taken on notice are due five days after receipt of the uncorrected proof transcript. Members have five days from today to submit additional questions.

The committee adjourned at 10.24 am.